



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State-Jackson State Postgame Quotes November 27, 2018

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"I just told the guys that every day you're challenged. Whether you're challenged in a classroom, or challenged by a member of your family, or challenged by the coaching staff like they were this week. We were challenged against Xavier and came back. We were challenged against Iowa State and we didn't fight hard enough. I said, 'This is the next challenge. You've been challenged. Let's see what you're about.' We talked about playing more pressure on defense, on the ball – not overplay, but on the ball. We talked about rebounding. We have to improve our rebounding. We talked about our conversion defense. Those are all areas where we felt we needed to improve, and I thought we showed progress on all of them. We are a work in progress, but I think we're still progressing. I thought the freshmen came in and Nathan (Mensah) with 11 rebounds was really nice in his limited minutes – 14 minutes and 11 rebounds. I thought we shared the ball. I think we had 29 baskets, and 20 of them assisted. We had 21 turnovers, which was way too much. Jalen (McDaniels) had seven of them, so hopefully that will be the last we see of that from him. He tried to do too much on the bounce. He knows that. Hopefully he'll be a little better with control of the ball. Our next challenge is our greatest. We're playing an Illinois State team that is picked to win the [Missouri] Valley [Conference] -- same conference that sent Loyola to the final four last year. We're going to travel time zones. We're going to fly to Chicago. We're going to get a bus and drive two hours there and play an early afternoon game. It's a great challenge. This is the next challenge. This one is the one that will make up for Iowa State. This is the one that, if you can get this one and if you can go and put that kind of effort in the fight, will take the sting away from that one."

On what the Aztecs did well:

"I thought we shared the ball offensively. Maybe not as quickly as I wanted to. I thought the pass was still a little bit slow going from A to B. I told them during a couple of timeouts that the ball moves faster passed than it does dribbled. I thought once we started moving it quicker, we had better opportunities. I thought we had a lot of nice assists where we hit guys for dunks. I thought our ball pressure was better in the first half. I thought whoever is on the ball pressured a little bit more where we were controlling things. This is a team [Jackson State] that I know is not ranked very high, but I just watched them play USD to the last eight, nine minutes of the game. I watched them play Boise to a close game into the second half. It was no small feat to come out and do what we did. People just expect it, but we played pretty well to create opportunities. I thought our press created a lot of opportunities. Our full-court pressure got them disrupted and provided a lot of fast-break opportunities for us tonight."

On tonight's defense:

"We've got to get stops. You can't win a game where all you're running is half-court offense. It will never happen. You have to get some fast breaks where you can free-flow. You have to get some second-chance points. You've got to hit the offensive glass. If you just have to win every game in the half-court, you're not going to have great success. We have to create turnovers. We have to be able to convert on those turnovers. We have to get offensive rebounds and second-chance opportunities because nobody's half-court offense in the country is enough to survive and win games over the long haul."

On tonight's turnovers:

"A lot of it was just too much on the dribble, and they confused us some. They switched from a man-to-man to a 3-2 matchup zone to a 2-3 zone. We never got completely comfortable with running a few things here and there. We tried to do too much on the dribble at the end of the shot clock. Even at the end when they were playing that matchup at the end, I was going high-low post and they were just matching up with each post. I just said at the end leave both posts low and throw the ball inside. Quit X-ing the post. There was some strategy I tried to help them with late. Sometimes when you set screens and they're switching and everything, there's nothing to look for in there. Some of it was strategy, some of it was just carelessness."

On his technical foul tonight:

"Yeah, I got a technical. I told the ref it was more about a mindset I was trying to get with my team than anything they did. A call. They came to the timeout. I said, 'I'm not coaching with 30 ahead and I hope you're not playing that way. You better play like I'm coaching, which means every possession is important.' I used it to try to show them that I'm not looking up at the 30 points and accepting anything from the officials, from myself or from this team. I used it as a chance to try and set the tone with the team. Obviously, I can't get technicals like that. It was a really good officiating crew. I told them during the last couple minutes of the game, 'It had more to do with my team than it had to do with you.' And they understood that I was coming off a 30-point loss, so they understood that, too. Yeah, I tried to get it."

On the upcoming three-game stretch:

"I'm trying to paint a picture for them. They will be prepared, whether they're ready for the challenge or not in this point of their career, I'm not sure. Being young is not an excuse anyone is going to accept. We have eight of our top 11 are either freshmen or sophomores, and they get better every day, but never as fast as a coach wants them to. But they are getting better, and I think you saw that today from a lot of them. Their level of play is getting better, but it may not be enough this early for some of the challenges we have ahead of us. By the end of the year, hopefully it will be. We're trying to bring them along as fast as we can, and I think they're making progress. With [the recent tournament in] Maui, three games in three days, I wanted to press more. I couldn't press with the numbers I had for three straight days. We are going to press more, but we can press with a day or two in-between games. We weren't going to press the level of competition we were playing for three straight games, 94 ft. with the numbers I'm playing. This is something we've been working on that is just one of the many things we're working on. You only have so much time in practice to devote to this or that. If you take two days off offensive execution, then that suffers. If you want to spend time on offense and you don't work on your post-double for two days, then your post-double suffers. Now, none of them are comfortable enough to just be automatic with some of the things we're asking them to do. We're usually pretty good at what we work on, and if we don't work at it for a day or two, then you look and you say, 'Well, we're not very good at it today.' It's a result of these guys still learning how to play basketball."

On sophomore guard Jordan Schakel this game:

"He's efficient and he's mentally tough. That's what you get from a mentally tough kid. You watch Jordan play and he's the same every game, isn't he? He plays with the same energy. He does the same things, and that's what coaches want. They want a certain comfort level where I know what I want and I get from Jordan when he steps on the floor. I don't have to wonder if he's had a bad week. He's going to play the same way every time he steps on the floor. That will earn him more minutes and more trust."

Sophomore Forward Matt Mitchell

On the threes at the start of the first half:

"I don't think it was a conscious effort. I think it was just more of what they gave us, just taking what they gave us. I feel like that's what it was."

On the special uniforms:

"It was for Native American Heritage Month. It was for giving back to the community and showing our support."

On takeaways from going up against big time players in Maui Jim Maui Invitational:

"Yeah, you definitely learn a lot about yourself and about your team. I think it was, like I said before, it was us taking it personal and today I think we took it more personal than we did in Maui. We did a lot better job at rebounding and getting back in transition, and eliminating transition points. So I feel like just taking that personally from this game on forth will be good for us."

On coming off the loss against Iowa State and if there is a chip on their shoulder:

"No. I think that's still there. We always want to play with a chip on our shoulder. We want to leave it in the past but never forget that it happened and forget that we are inconsistent a little bit and so moving forward we know we need to be better."

On improvements moving forward:

"First it's just mental. It's just a mental thing to not make a turnover, to make the right play, and to not travel. It's just things we need to excel and improve on. I'm sure once we've watched the film we'll see our mistakes and we'll make the corrections."

On the faster game pace increasing turnovers:

"You have to accept that there are some turnovers, but you have to try and limit them."

On teammates stepping up:

"I feel like Nolan Narain did a great job coming off the bench and playing a great role, Nate (Mensah) as well. I feel like them responding to the coaches in practice and what they've done over the course of our six games this season shows that they've really excelled."

Sophomore Guard Jordan Schakel

On if the threes produced momentum:

"You know it helps a lot but I think mainly our energy was great this game starting on the defensive end. I think that really triggers everything for us. When you play hard and you play the right way things tend to fall in your favor most of the time. I think that's more of what that was."

On if the team learned from the Maui Jim Maui Invitational:

"Definitely. On the defensive end, rebounding and getting back in transition were two spots that we really needed to pick up on in practice and in the game, and just get a lot better at defense and energy in general. So we learned a lot in Maui."

On the high number of turnovers:

"I feel like in order to win you have to value the ball and every time that there is a turnover, it just gives the other team an opportunity so I just feel like, to help the team win, it's just very valuable to take care of the ball and it does make me very angry."

On the illegal screen call:

"I don't know if it was a good call or a bad call, but in the moment I feel like I let my emotions get to me a little bit, but I feel like it was a good call."

On emotions after turnover:

"Yeah. I feel like I've been using it to give me energy on the defensive end and just get a stop and get it right back for us."

On the upcoming away games:

"It's always great playing here in front of our amazing fans but on the road, it's a different story. It's always a challenge no matter who you play and we do have some tough opponents coming up. We've got to have all hands on deck."

On the threat of all players on the court making threes:

"It's a big threat in the modern game, especially having a five-man that can step back and shoot it like that. It puts a lot of pressure on the defense and opens a lot of driving angles as well."

Jackson State Head Coach Wayne Brent

On the team's overall performance tonight:

"It's a game we try not to put too much in to because we've been on the road for so long. I think we've been on the road for 13 or 14 days. We leave here and go to Santa Clara. Mentally, can you keep getting guys back and ready to play without going home to have a home game? It's tough, especially when you're on the road this much. I told our guys that this is a game we're not going to watch much film on. We're going to

move forward on to the next game. We travel about eight hours tomorrow. We have to get ready for Santa Clara. We can't get on the floor to practice because we're so beat up and banged up, so were just trying to get through the game and go home."

On the biggest takeaway from tonight's game:

"They're [San Diego State] a big, athletic team. They push the ball up the floor — good in transition. Those first five, all of them can dribble, pass and score, so it's hard to lock in to one guy because they have so many guys in that first five who can score the ball. They have a lot of power in that first five."

On playing several road games in a short period of time:

"It's very tough. You have 18 to 22-year-olds. They've been gone for so long, and when they get back — we left two weeks ago — and when we get back, we'll be in final exams. You're talking about being on the road in strange places away from home — it's hard to practice. You don't have your own place to practice. They give you your practice time. You don't have your training room, so there's a lot of stuff missing, but for teams in our league, this is what we have to do to pay the bills — go out and play a guarantee game — but everyone in our league does this. It's not like we're putting ourselves in a bad situation."

On F Jayveous McKinnis blocking San Diego State F Jalen McDaniels:

"He has a chance to be a really good player. I think he has been one of the ones who has been playing really well for us, but I think for him being a freshman and having to be on the road for so long, that's why I sat him that whole second half."

On the bench players' productivity tonight:

"I think what happened is the wear and tear on our main five guys — just them playing so many minutes over the last four or five games, and those bench guys haven't been playing those minutes, so they looked like they were more ready to play today. I can play them knowing that once we get to a certain point knowing we couldn't get back the game, so you're trying to practice and get some of your younger guys some playing time. We kind of use it as a practice game."

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